- C1852-2 -
11/18/87

The New Mega-Discounting: Dan Mendenhall Speaks
Publishing Issues: How Menacing Is the Red Menace? • Publishers Recall the Depression
Spanish Printers Eye the U.S. Market • National Book Award Winners

Publishers Weekly

A CAHNERS/R.R. BOWKER PUBLICATION THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING NOVEMBER 20, 1987 $2.50

Zebra... You've Seen Us Climb

Pub. Date: April, 1988
$3.95/$4.95
A Doubleday Hardcover

Pub. Date: April, 1988, $4.95/$5.95
A Donald I. Fine Hardcover

Pub. Date: April, 1988, $3.95/$4.95

Publishers Weekly is published weekly by Bowker Magazine Group, Cahners Magazine Division, William M. Platt, President; Terrence M. McDermott, Executive Vice President; Carroll V. Dearden, Group Vice President; Jerry D. Nash, Vice President/Publishing Operations; J. J. Walsh, Financial Vice President/Magazine Division; Thomas J. Dellamaria, Vice President/Production & Manufacturing. Bowker Magazine Group is also an affiliate of R. R. Bowker Co., Gordon Graham, Chairman of the Board; Ira Siegel, President.

Copyright © 1987 by Reed Publishing, USA. Saul Goldweitz, Chairman; Ronald G. Segal, President & Chief Executive Officer; Robert L. Krakoff, Executive Vice President.

Printed in the U.S.A. SUBSCRIPTION: U.S.A.: 1 year $91, 2 years $155, 3 years $217. Canada: 1 year $177, 2 years $300, 3 years $420. Surface delivery to all other countries: 1 year $200. Air delivery to all other countries: 1 year $250, 2 years $425, 3 years $595. (Remit in U.S. funds only.) Single copy $2.50; announcements $5.95 each. PUBLICATION ADDRESS: Publishers Weekly, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302. *Address editorial and advertising correspondence to* 249 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011; telephone: 212-645-0067; telex: 12-7703. *Address circulation correspondence and changes of address to* Publishers Weekly, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302; telephone 1-800-431-1713; in Ohio 614-383-3141. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Publishers Weekly*, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302. Cahners Publishing Company, a Division of Reed Publishing USA ☐ Specialized Business and Consumer Magazines for Building & construction ☐ Interior Design ☐ Electronics & Computers ☐ Foodservice & Lodging ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Book Publishing & Libraries ☐ Medical/Health Care ☐ Child Care & Development.

Publishers Weekly

VOLUME 232 NUMBER 21
ISSN 000-0019

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING

NOVEMBER 20, 1987

PUBLISHER
Neil A. Perlman

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
John F. Baker

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Daisy Maryles

MANAGING EDITOR
Eilen Mangin

SENIOR EDITORS
Madalynne Reuter *News*
Genevieve Stuttaford *Forecasts*
Allene Symons *Bookselling, Marketing*

SENIOR ASSOCIATE EDITORS
William Goldstein *Trade News*
John Mutter *Paperbacks*
Diane Roback *Children's Books*
Tom Spain *Audio/Video Plus*
Sybil Steinberg *Fiction, Interviews*

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Sonja Bolle *Bookselling*
Penny Kaganoff *How-To Books*

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Maureen J. O' Brien *Trade News, Bookselling*
Calvin Reid *News, People*

COPY EDITOR
Loretta Lettner Wilson

RESEARCH LIBRARIAN
Miriam E. Phelps

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Isabell L. Taylor

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Carolyn T. Anthony, Robert A. Carter, John P. Dessauer, Kimberly Olson Fakih, Gayle Feldman, Jerome P. Frank, Chandler B. Grannis, William Griffin, Jean F. Mercier, Paul S. Nathan, Carol E. Rinzler

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT
Herbert R. Lottman *Paris*

CORRESPONDENTS
Howard Fields *Washington*
Lisa See *Los Angeles*
Beverley Slopen *Toronto*
Bob Summer *Southeast*
Tim Unsworth, *Midwest*

DIRECTOR OF THE ART DEPARTMENT
Barrie Stern

ART DIRECTOR
Maureen Gleason

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION
Robert Elder

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER
Jane Perkinson

SENIOR PRODUCTION EDITOR
Nancy Brown

PRODUCTION EDITORS
Cheryl Brown, Victoria Cervantes, Ann Yazejian

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION MANAGER
Lorena Parrish

ADVERTISING TRAFFIC COORDINATOR
Leonora Waters

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Deborah Halverson

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
MigDalia D. Afflick

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING SALES
Alan Schlanger

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING MANAGER
Frieda Johnson

PUBLISHING MARKETPLACE MANAGER
Jane Belostock

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Joan Roman

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Christine Duffy

FEATURES

How the Book Trade Survived the Great Depression 19

It was a tough time, but publishers knew how to find, make and sell good books *by Chandler B. Grannis*

Publishing Issues

How Menacing Is the Red Menace 23

Do novels portraying Soviets as villains influence our perceptions of the U.S.S.R.? *by Edward Beecher Claflin*

DEPARTMENTS

NEWS OF THE WEEK 11

Korea Says Piracy Accord Can't Be Enforced

10 Win $25,000 Whiting Awards

Harper's Pomerance to Leave Publishing, Enter Law

Contracts: Panel Attempts New Look at Old Conflicts

Suprise Winner, and Political Tone, Mark NBA

Justices Quiz Both Sides in Virginia Minors Access Law

AAP Sales Report for Sept.

TRADE NEWS 26

History of Tobacco Industry by Kluger Announced by Knopf

Scribners to Publish the Letters of Edith Wharton

Doubleday, Dell Get Second Novel by Stephen Coonts

Back to Press

PAJ Branches Out Dramatically into Fiction

BOOKSELLING 31

Hurts, Remainders or What?

Megadiscounting by Mendenhall and look-alike warehouse retailers causes conflicts

A Holiday Guide to Wholesaler Services

AUDIO/VIDEO PLUS .. 39

Peale Launches Audio Publisher for Positive-Thinking Authors

Word How-To Library Offers Spiritual Perspective

BOOK DESIGN & MANUFACTURING 42

Paper Buying Strategies

Spanish Printers Cast Glances at U.S. Market

The Manufacturing Front

PW INTERVIEWS 51

Steve Sohmer

FORECASTS 53

Nonfiction 53
How-To Books 56
Fiction 59
Paperbacks 64

COLUMNS

Highlights 9
Letters 10
Media 10
Calendar 10
People 18
Rights 25
Talk of the Trade 30
Southern Spotlight 38
Letter from the Midwest ... 41
My Say: *Charles R. Larson* 49
Weekly Exchange 68
Paperback Bestsellers 72
Hardcover Bestsellers 74

SALES OFFICES: Cahners Publishing Company, 249 W. 17th St., New York, N.Y. 10011 (212-645-0067): Stephen M. Chasen (212-463-6810); Holly Maiekian (212-463-6809) Lynn Myers (212-463-6811). MIDWEST: Edward Associates, Morton Grove, Ill. 60053 (312-470-1777); SOUTH: Robin Mays, R. R. Bowker Co., P.O. Box 88294, Atlanta, Ga. 30356 (404-998-3624). WEST: James K. Lavitt and Associates, Inc., 11921 Vose St., North Hollywood, Calif. 91605 (818-764-5101). NON-U.S.A. representatives: Canada: Claude Choquette, Montreal-Contacts The Rights Agency, Montreal and Toronto. France, French-speaking Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland: Eliane Benisti, Paris, France. Germany, Austria, Flemish-speaking Belgium and German-speaking Switzerland: Barbara Malmsheimer, Zurich, Switzerland. Italy: Dennis Linder, Agenzia Letteraria Internationale, Milan. Japan: Tom Mori, Tuttle-Mori Agency, Tokyo. Scandinavia and The Netherlands: Lennart Sane, Lennart Sane Agency, Karlshamn, Sweden. Spain, Portugal and Latin America, including Brazil: Carmen Balcells, Barcelona, Spain. United Kingdom and Ireland: Tracey Lehane, Cahners LTD. London. Publishers Weekly reserves the right to make its own independent judgment as to the acceptability of advertising copy and illustrations in advertisements. Advertiser and advertising agency assume liability for all content (including text, representation and illustrations) of advertisements printed and also assume responsibility for any claims arising therefrom against the publisher. Offers to sell products that appear in Publishers Weekly are subject to all laws and regulations and are void where so prohibited.

Supreme Court Justices Quiz Both Sides in Virginia Minors Access Law

The eight sitting U.S. Supreme Court justices came down hard November 4 on both sides in a dispute concerning a Virginia law governing displays in bookstores.

Most of the justices participated in the hard questioning of lawyers for Virginia and for the American Booksellers Association, giving little indication of the final outcome, other than that they may remand the case to lower courts to resolve technical questions.

At issue in the case is a 1985 amendment to a Virginia law that drew on two previous Supreme Court decisions, one defining obscenity and the other endorsing restrictions on sale of pornography to children. The amendment outlaws the display of questionable books in such a way that minors could read them. Forty-eight states have similar laws.

The ABA, joined by publishers, distributors, college bookstores, authors, the American Civil Liberties Union and two Virginia stores immediately challenged the constitutionality of the law, even though the state had not yet moved to enforce it. The lower courts ruled in favor of the booksellers.

Much of the questioning concerned evidence admitted in the District Court trial showing that 5%–25% of the materials sold by general bookstores would fall within the Supreme Court's definition of obscenity in *Miller* v. *California* as it would be applied to juveniles. The work had to appeal to their prurient interests, be patently offensive to them and lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

The booksellers did not challenge that definition contained in old law, but brought suit after the Virginia legislature amended it to say that the knowing display of such material "in a manner whereby juveniles may examine or peruse" it was unlawful.

Richard B. Smith, assistant Virginia attorney general, opened the arguments with a statement that if the booksellers were correct that works by Joyce and Faulkner, and the *Penguin Book of Love Poetry* would be reached by the law, then "we should lose the case. Virginia has no desire to restrict that type of material."

Several justices picked up on that statement, with John Paul Stevens asking Smith why the state didn't challenge the District Court statistic and if it did not, "why shouldn't we accept that as fact?" Smith said the court just assumed the figure to be correct.

Several justices pressed him, Byron White saying, "If we find the court of appeals defined the law more broadly than you, we might take the court of appeals view." Smith had said the range of books covered by the law "is a very narrow range . . . borderline obscenity."

Chief Justice William Rehnquist said that if pornography is involved, the percentage of books affected makes no difference. Justice Antonin Scalia agreed. Smith acknowledged, however, that if the law were to affect a large percentage of books, it would be too burdensome on booksellers. Smith said, "On an everyday bookstore, that is correct."

Paul M. Bator, with the Chicago firm of Mayer, Brown & Platt, came under equally harsh questioning by the justices, who wondered why sectioning off part of a bookstore "for adults only" or "for children only" would be an onerous idea.

Bator responded that doing so would change the very nature of bookstores. After listening to that line of questioning, Bruce Rich, of Weil, Gotshal & Manages, said, "I didn't get the sense that there are any bookstore browsers on the bench."

Bator said that if the law were upheld booksellers would have to practice "self-censorship, leading to excessive burden on adults, which would make this statute unconstitutional."

—H.F.

AAP Sales Report for September

Category	% change, September	% change, YTD
Adult hardcover	25.6	13.7
Adult paperback	-0.2	13.9
Juvenile hardcover	15.7	22.7
Juvenile paperback	25.6	20.6
Univ. Pr. hardcover	14.3	7.3
Univ. Pr. paperback	13.2	10.3
Bibles, etc.	72.6	17.5
Mass market paperback	-12.2	9.3
Book club	28.9	13.3
Mail order	-2.1	2.4
Sci-tech	-5.3	11.2
College texts	4.7	4.2
School texts	5.5	5.6

Is Maxwell Communications Angling For Bell & Howell?

After its recent acquisition of 2.3% of Bell & Howell & Co., Maxwell Communications Corporation appears to have joined Macmillan and the Bass group investors in considering a takeover of the publishing and information services concern.

In a letter to Bell & Howell chairman Donald N. Frey, Robert Maxwell, chairman of Maxwell Communications, declared that his company intends to seek antitrust clearance so that, "Should the opportunity present itself to do a transaction . . . regulatory requirements would not impede or delay us." In the letter Maxwell also assures the company that his intentions are not hostile, though he observes, "We wish to avoid battles and join them only if we're forced to."

A Bell & Howell spokesman emphasized that the company wishes to remain independent.

Maxwell failed in a $1.7 billion takeover bid for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich this summer and is reported to be intent on acquiring a major American publishing firm. Bell & Howell's textbooks and information services would "fit us like a glove," Maxwell has said. Bell & Howell's 9.38 million shares, plus an additional 1.2 million shares held in executive stock options and preferred stock, would cost at least $600 million, although that figure would rise in a takeover battle.

Bell & Howell has been regarded as a takeover target in recent months. In September Macmillan, another educational publisher, bought a 6.6% stake in the company, a move it described as being for investment purposes (News of the Week, Sept. 25). But in October the company raised its position to 7.7% and said that some action to seek control might be considered. A group of investors headed by Texan Robert M. Bass owns 15.9% of Bell & Howell and is reported to have met for talks with Bell & Howell management.

Bell & Howell earned $32.9 million on sales of $853.4 million last year. In addition to publishing textbooks and operating database services, it owns Merrill Publishing, an educational publisher.

Maxwell Communications Corporation is reported to be the U.S.'s second largest commercial printer. In 1986 it earned net income of £60.3 million on sales of £461.7 million. It owns Britain's tabloid *Daily Mirror* and has extensive investments in television, printing and publishing.

How The Book Trade Survived THE GREAT DEPRESSION

It was a tough time, but publishers knew how to find, make and sell good books

BY CHANDLER B. GRANNIS

Twelve years ago, some legendary publishing figures reminisced to PW *about the daunting decade of the 1930s. Because their experience could be instructive today if, as some forecasters fear, October 19, 1987 ushers in the same kind of hard times that October 24, 1929 did, we reprint excerpts from the March 10, 1975 articles.*

© Nelle Davis

Somehow we managed to manage," said Storer B. Lunt, sales manager for the very young firm (1926) of W. W. Norton, talking of the Great Depression.

The industry survived because it applied commonsense procedures progressively as the crisis deepened. Overhead costs, especially for administration and space, were kept very low. Profit expectations, if any, were also low. Everyone took salary cuts. Many had unpaid vacations. Expense accounts were barely visible. Title output was slashed. Book prices remained modest. Sales efforts were persistent.

Besides cutting titles, publishers cut print orders severely. Census of Manufactures data indicate a nationwide drop in numbers of copies of all books printed, from 1929 to 1933, of about 48%. School book production dropped in the same period by 40%; fiction, by about 57%. Among other groups, fine arts book output dropped 71%; history, 63%; science and technology, only 25%. Most editions were small. "Small" could mean anythng from several thousand to under 2000, even under 1000 copies.

The industry's dollar receipts seem to have ranged between $200 million and $300 million in the '30s. It was a tiny segment of the American economy, but it is rightly remembered as one of the more fortunate areas.

Trade Firms and Their Markets

Donald S. Klopfer of Random House was one of several who pointed out the relatively happy

Grannis joined the staff of Publishers Weekly *in 1936.*

Returns Are Born

No one is certain when the policy of outright selling began its erosion, but certainly the word "consignment" was on many lips before October 24, 1929. One reason was that too many publishers were printing 3000 copies of a book, selling around 850 and taking a pasting on the remaining 2000 or so. In those days there was just one remainder king, Max Salop, founder of Harlem Books. He would pick up a book, heft it and make one of two statements: "It weighs good," or "It weighs bad." If a book weighed bad—and most novels and nonfiction titles did—10 cents was considered a handsome offer.

As the '30s and the Great Depression arrived simultaneously, the problem of outright selling became acute. Bookstores' orders for new titles dropped so dramatically that by 1931 virtually every publisher was offering its books on a two-way basis, outright and consignment. In other words, if a book buyer said, "I'll take five," the salesman would say, "How abut five more on consignment?"—or, as it came to be called, "five for the window," a phrase that somehow conveyed the hope that the second five would be prominently displayed.

To the best of my knowledge, the revolutionary change in marketing policy involving automatic returns came about after a 10-minute talk between Dick Simon of Simon & Schuster and myself.

"Look," he said, in effect. "We're the entrepreneurs. When we take a book it's because we think it will sell. Why should the bookseller take the rap because we made a mistake?"

"No reason," I said. "Besides, we've fewer stores to sell to every week."

We sat down together and wrote a notice to the trade, something like this:

"Simon & Schuster ships you books that we hope and expect you will sell. If they don't, it's our boner, not yours.

"Therefore, effective at once, all Essandess books in your stock which you consider excess inventory may be returned to us at any time with full credit.

"We hope this new policy will make your life more livable."

The announcement created slightly more than a mild stir in the book trade. Most publishers were outraged at the idea, a few approved. Yet inside of a year more than a dozen houses adopted the same policy or variations on it and by the mid-'40s virtually the entire industry was accepting full returns, with or without minor penalties.

—ALBERT RICE LEVENTHAL

Leventhal was associated with Simon & Schuster for 25 years, ultimately as executive v-p.

position of the book world in the Depression: "The publishing industry was lucky on the whole. We were not making any fortunes, but we survived." Having acquired and developed Modern Library in 1925, he and Bennett A. Cerf organized Random House in 1927. Even in the Depression, Klopfer recalls, "We were growing and made at least some money every year, and we put it in the business. We just took salaries, and those were not high."

Cass Canfield of Harper pointed out that, after the 1929 stock crash, "sales held up well for a long while. They didn't drop until late 1932, and then they dropped probably two-thirds. One point about the Great Depression was that it lasted so long; we didn't really recover until the war years." One of the very important reasons for publishers' survival, Canfield said, is that, as sales were dropping in the early '30s, costs were dropping, too. "Our cash position was good because we were spending less. Paper prices were depressed, and we were not making many books."

"For Norton," said Storer Lunt, "the plug was pulled in 1932 when our bank failed and our working capital was frozen. As I remember, we directors got at least some capital by digging into our own pockets and we also went around the corner to the old Bank of Manhattan. They looked at us (Warden Norton, Howard Wilson and me) and after a nice talk they gave us all the credit we needed."

The One-Order Day

"The absolute low was one day's business which consisted of one order for one copy of one book, appropriately entitled *The Revolt of the Masses* by Ortega," continued Lunt. "There was one year when the annual business totalled only $128,000.

"I was covering, four to six times a year, 26 cities as far west as Minneapolis-St. Paul, and New York City from Morningside Heights to Brooklyn. Travel was only by train, in coaches and upper berths, and I stayed at second-rate hotels. Travelers would be out on the road two or three weeks or a month at a time; there were no quick airplane trips for a day or two out and back.

"Trade publishers were relying on backlist titles and bestsellers. Single-copy orders were welcome, and the smallest outlets were called upon. Many bookstores failed, and the credit problem for all shops was acute. We had to be darn careful about giving credit,

but we took more chances than we would now, and we took back stock that a bookseller was stuck with—by arrangement with the individual dealer. There was no regular system of returns."

"The trade market was there all the time," Donald Klopfer said. "Books were a cheap form of entertainment and knowledge. We were fortunate to have the Modern Library." With its careful selection and significant and exciting authors, "Modern Library at 95 cents kept going up in sales, and we kept adding and dropping titles. When we won the censorship battle for James Joyce's *Ulysses* late in 1933, we put the book into the Modern Library Giant line at $1.

"We generated our own capital; we paid printers' bills on time; we didn't expand very much. When rumors got around that President Roosevelt was going to close the banks, I took a cash check to our bank so as to set aside enough money to meet our payroll. Paper salesmen were knocking at our door during the Depression. Not a great many bookstore accounts were lost."

Cutting the Lists

For a time, of course, the book business did hurt. Speaking on "The Book in the Economic Depression," Herbert E. Jenkins, vice-president of Little, Brown, said (*PW*, March 25, 1933): "It is generally conceded that trade publishers' sales have been reduced 50% or more in the last three years." He reported salary cuts and reduction of personnel and added: "Three dozen of the largest and most active trade publishers actually cut their listings by 20%."

Reliable market breakdowns were not being compiled for the book industry in 1930s, but the sharp falling off of retail sales was crucial to trade publishers, even though they could not measure its total dimensions. No wonder, therefore, that, as Storer Lunt recalls, "for publishers, a book club selection or a bestseller made all the difference in the world." Book club business was another area that was not adequately measured; but at least the two main clubs—Book-of-the-Month and Literary Guild, both dating from the mid-1920s—stayed in business and had several hundred thousand subscribers each.

One major retail outlet that nearly went under was Brentano's. It had overexpanded just before the crash, was placed under publisher trustees and in early 1933 went into bankruptcy. But it was reorganized and kept afloat, because the industry needed it.

Census of Maufactures: Millions of Copies Printed

Year	*Total Books*	*School Text Books*	*Fiction Only*
1927	219.28	83.85	34.09
1929	235.36	80.19	26.88
1931	154.24	65.29	19.25
1933	120.79	48.07	11.53
1935	140.65	69.18	15.24
1937	197.36	72.77	25.45
1939	182.32	63.27	14.81

(Figures extracted from Census of Manufactures reports in PW, *January 21, 1933, and May 23, 1942.)*

For the library market, too, totals are hard to come by, but the NABP in 1933 reported, as indicators, the slashing of book budgets in several large systems. Among these, Philadelphia had no book budget at all in 1932 and 1933; the Chicago systems book budget dropped from $6000 to zero in those two years; and New York's book fund shrank from $261,050 to $60,431. At the same time, people were flocking to libraries; the ALA reported a four-million leap in enrollments nationally by 1933.

The Depression had barely begun when, sensible of long-existing problems, the industry sponsored an unprecedented study of its condition. In 1930, on the initiative of the NABP and with financial cooperation from the ABA, Employing Bookbinders, ALA and others, an "Economic Survey of the Book Industry" was made by a banker and economist, O. H. Cheney, and his staff. NABP published the report in 1932. It was acerbic, controversial, stimulating and is debated to this day. It presented new material about readers and buyers, libraries and the breakdown of book markets. Its chief recommendations (among 97 given in a closing summary) dealt with improving distribution and trade relations, reducing waste and "redistributing burdens and hazards." It urged tighter management, better statistics, cooperative promotion.

The Textbook Picture

Curtis G. Benjamin of McGraw-Hill recalled how the Depression affected college and professional books. He had joined the firm in 1928 as a college textbook traveler covering 14 Western states and two Canadian provinces. When the stock market crashed in 1929, he didn't see much effect at first in the West; but in the period from 1928 to 1932, McGraw-Hill's book business dropped by half.

One source of strength for books in a time of recession, Benjamin said, is that many people managed to go back to school and somehow to spend a bit on books for classes or self-instruction. McGraw-Hill, he remembers, sold books for the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps and for vocational training and university extension—more than for regular college courses.

In October, 1932, Benjamin came back to New York to become manager of the college department. "I am probably," he said, "the only man in the book business to have gotten a raise and a cut in salary in the same sentence. Our president, Martin Foss, said: 'We'll start you at $6000' (or whatever it was per year), 'but since we have all taken 20% cuts, *you* will take that cut too."

The school textbook output for the period 1927–1939—at least so far as it was reported for compilation in the then biennial U.S. Census of Manufactures—fluctuated very widely. But regardless of quantity, winds of social change were reshaping the content of many textbooks, leading eventually to attacks by would-be censors. But such attacks were less virulent during the Depression than later.

At the retail end of the business, booksellers struggled, lived on minuscule salaries and tried every

sales device they could. American Booksellers Association conventions, increasingly as the Depression went on, gave heavy attention to methods of promotion and efficient store management.

To most booksellers, price stability was a clearcut matter of survival. The ABA since 1900 had fought for it and lost, and fought again. In 1933, therefore, the booksellers welcomed—as did most publishers as well—the chance to establish fair practices and price stability under the National Recovery Administration (NRA). This was done through the writing of publishing, retailing and other book industry codes of practice. To everyone's consternation, however, the Supreme Court ruled against NRA on May 17, 1935 (during the ABA convention!). Price wars instantly broke out. In New York it was Gimbel's *vs.* Macy's, with Modern Library getting down to nine cents a volume. A New York fair trade price law then went into effect, and brought some stability.

A good deal of information about contemporary bookselling practices is contained in the draft of the Booksellers' Code, submitted by the ABA and the National Association of College Stores. The Code set up a 45-hour week (52 for peak periods); a $14 weekly minimum wage in cities of over 500,000; $13.50 in cities of 100,000–500,000; $13 in smaller places—except that wages were $1 less in the South.

Institutional discounts were pegged at 10%. Overstock was not to be sold at reduced prices until one year after publication, except for secondhand and shelfworn books. Publishers' remainders of fiction were to be reduced in price only afer two Christmas seasons; nonfiction, after two years from publication. Reduced-price reprints of nonfiction were not to be sold until a year after publication, nor a reprint at $1 or less, until after two years. Misleading ads and invidious references to bookstores and prices were banned. At the time of NRA, clearly, it was cutrate competition that chiefly exercised booksellers.

Title Output

Year	*Total New Books*	*Fiction*
1929	10,187	2,142
1931	10,307	1,942
1933	8,092	1,806
1936	10,436	1,899 *
1938	11,067	1,663
1939	10,640	1,547

** figures not reached again until postwar flowering of paperbacks.*

What Was Selling

The ultimate strength of the book industry in the Depression lay, of course, in its products. Many books remained bestsellers for more than a year.

Some of the outstanding sellers of the era are memorable; for example: *Anthony Adverse*, 300,000 in 1933 and 176,000 in 1934; *Seven Gothic Tales* in 1934; *Lost Horizon* and *Of Time and the River* in 1935; *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, 729,000 copies in 1937; *The Late George Apley* and *The Flowering of New England* in 1937; *The Grapes of Wrath*, 300,000 in 1939; and in 1940 *How Green Was My Valley*, *Kitty Foyle*, *Mrs. Miniver*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Nazarene*.

James T. Farrell and John Dos Passos were publishing their famous trilogies in the 1930s. Poets and social critics published important works: Edna St. Vincent Millay, Archibald MacLeish, Carl Sandburg, Edmund Wilson, Lincoln Steffens, Walter Lippmann. The WPA Federal Writers' Project, 1935–1939, helped thousands of writers and turned out the notable U.S. Guides series. In the stores, *Gone With the Wind*, with its first half-year sale of a million copies, stimulated business at the end of the decade.

So, in essence, the book industry "managed" because skilled bookmen and bookwomen were running it and knew how to find, make and sell good books. □

The Remainder Scene

The going rate from remainder houses was usually a dime a book, with higher prices grudgingly paid, not because of the contents, but merely because the volume happened to weigh more than the average novel.

These entrepreneurs would then sell the remainders to cigar stores, stationery shops, druggists or any other retailer who could be persuaded that if he bought a $5 biography for 50 cents it would be easy to dispose of it for at least $2. Of those doleful days it was truly said that a book that proved to be a drug in a bookstore eventually ended up as a book in a drugstore.

Many booksellers decided to get a piece of the action. A new gambit, started by one bookseller in New York, and immediately imitated from coast to coast, was to tie four books in a bundle (usually four mystery novels, on the theory that people were looking for escape literature) and then place a sign above the bundles reading: *"Buy a bundle of mystery stories—days of exciting reading—only a dollar a bundle!"*

Probably the lowest point to which the selling of books at retail ever sank was when a bookshop on Times Square placed two barrels of books outside, with a sign which read: *"All the books you can carry! For only one dollar!"* —MICHAEL GROSS

GROSS *was an expert on the promotion of remainders.*